

WABASH VALLEY

P R O F I L E S

A series of tributes to hometown people and events that have shaped our history.

Juliet Peddle



For at least 40 years, Terre Haute's pioneer female architect Juliet A. Peddle toiled to perpetuate her community's heritage.

Now, nearly 20 years after her death, Peddle's uncommon talent will be shared with the public. On Saturday, March 6 at the Swope Art Museum, Terre Haute Landmarks Inc. will unveil four limited edition prints from *The Juliet Peddle Collection*, unique pencil illustrations of Vigo County landmarks sketched in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The display is offered in observance of Women's History Month and Vigo County's "Celebrate the Century" project.

Born June 7, 1899, at 30 Gilbert Ave., Juliet was the oldest daughter of John Peddle, professor of machine design at Rose Polytechnic, and Alice Elliott Oney. In 1901 the Peddles engaged architect Herman Foltz to design a new residence at 2117 North Tenth Street on "Professor's Row" in Collett Park. Juliet spent her Terre Haute years in that home. As a youth she attended King Classical School, eventually studying architecture at the University of Michigan. Licensed in 1926, she was one of only seven female architects in Illinois. The next summer she sketched her way across Europe, returning to work with Foltz in Indianapolis and Edward H. Clark Inc. of Chicago. While living in the Windy City, she co-founded the Chicago Women's Architectural Forum and edited *The Architrave*.

After his appointment to acting president of Rose Poly in 1928, John Peddle suffered a crippling stroke, prompting Juliet to move closer to home. For a while she worked for the Historical American Building Survey in Galena, Ill. In 1935 — two years after her father's death — she opened an office in the Grand Opera House. During World War II she worked for local architects Miller, Vrydagh & Yeager and then for Commercial Solvents Corp., designing its animal research building.

Peddle cultivated alliances with the Vigo County Historical Society, Community Theater and the Women's Department Club. Her ideas are evident in the design, remodeling or expansion of several notable area structures, including Crawford School, Poplar Street Mediacenter, Emeline Fairbanks Memorial Library, First Congregational Church, several buildings on the Rose-Hulman campus, the Weldin Talley Memorial Playhouse and Franklin School. In the late 1930s she began depicting pre-Civil War Vigo County buildings in pencil. When first displayed, her 60 delicate sketches were highly praised for exactness and charm. Sadly, they have been unavailable for public view for almost 60 years. Terre Haute Landmarks intends to distribute four different sketches annually to its membership. The first set includes G.A.R. Memorial Hall, the Preston House, the Herman Hulman home and Asbury Chapel. Only 250 numbered prints of each are available.

Juliet Peddle Park on South 25th Street, at the site of the former home of sportsman-mayor Vernon R. McMillan, was named in her memory shortly after her death on Sept. 7, 1979.

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